

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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P 082257Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 169515

EXDIS

E.O. ,1652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BA

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST FORCE AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE

1. FORMER COMIDEASTFOR, REAR ADMIRAL BIGLEY, CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON UNDER SECRETARY HABIB JULY 7 FOR REVIEW OF BAHRAIN PRIME MINISTER'S MIDDLE EAST FORCE INITIATIVE. IN ADDITION TO REVIEWING HISTORY AND USEFULNESS OF MIDEAST-FORCE, AND OF RECENT INITIATIVE ALONG LINES OF YOUR RECENT REPORTING, BIGLEY SAID THAT THOUGH CROWN PRINCE IS NOT PRECISE ABOUT WHAT HE WOULD LIKE TO GET FROM US, ASSISTANCE WITH SITE SURVEY FOR COASTAL FORCE BASE, FINANCIAL HELP WITH PURCHASE OF COAST GUARD VESSEL, AND PERHAPS SOME ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS HAVE BEEN MENTIONED BY HIM IN CONVERSATIONS WITH BIGLEY. ALSO, BIGLEY GAVE IT AS HIS ESTIMATE THAT ASSISTANCE IN THE RANGE OF DOLLARS 4-10 MILLION WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO SECURE EXTENSION OF MIDEASTFORCE. THOUGH BIGLEY WAS NOT PRECISE ABOUT DURATION OF EXTENSION HE THOUGHT SUCH AN AMOUNT MIGHT PROCURE, HE IMPLIED THAT AT LEAST A YEAR'S EXTENSION SHOULD BE

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ATTAINABLE.

2. BIGLEY SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION BAHRAINI MOTIVE IN OPENING THIS QUESTION AGAIN AT THIS TIME IS IN PART RESULT OF DECREASE IN PRESSURES FOR GOB TO MAINTAIN IMAGE OF

DEVOTION TO ARAB UNITY AND PARALLEL INCREASE IN DESIRE TO PURSUE REGIONAL CONCERNS, SUCH AS HAWAR ISLAND DISPUTE, FROM POSITION OF GREATER STRENGTH. HE ALSO NOTED BAHRAINI DESIRE TO BE IN POSITION TO MAKE CREDIBLE DONATIONS TO ARAB LEAGUE OR OTHER JOINT ARAB PEACEKEEPING FORCES. CONCERNING STATUS OF INITIATIVE WITHIN GOB, BIGLEY SAID HE BELIEVES PRIME MINISTER WOULD LIKE A USG RESPONSE TO HIS APPROACH BEFORE HE RAISES IT WITH FULL CABINET. HE ALSO SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTER, APPARENTLY STILL IN THE DARK, WILL FALL INTO LINE WHEN TOLD TO DO SO, AND THAT DEVELOPMENT MINISTER SHIRAWI WOULD SUPPORT RETENTION OF MIDEASTFORCE.

3. DEPARTMENT IS NOW STUDYING THE OPTIONS FOR POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO THE GOB AND WOULD LIKE YOUR VIEWS ON FOREGOING, AS WELL AS OTHER INPUT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO MAKE, BY OPENING OF BUSINESS HERE JULY 12. KISSINGER

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